

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-19 remain in this application and, as amended herein, are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

Applicants express appreciation to the Examiner for the telephone interview held on May 31, 2007 during which the Nickum reference was discussed.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 5, 7, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Nickum (U.S. Patent No. 6,359,661). Applicants submit that the claims are patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

Claims 1, 10, and 11 have been amended to more clearly show the differences between the claimed invention and Nickum.

Based on the results of the telephone interview, claim 1, for example, has been amended to more clearly show that (i) the information processing apparatus not only includes a plurality of controlled hardware portions but also includes a storage unit operable to carry out at least one function not performed by any of the plurality of controlled hardware portions and a controller operable to carry out at least another function not performed by any of the plurality of controlled hardware portions, (ii) the at least one function not performed by any of the plurality of controlled hardware portions includes the storing steps set out in claim 1, and (iii) the at least another function not performed by any of the plurality of controlled hardware portions includes the referring step defined in claim 1. Therefore, the operations described at column 7, lines 6-10 of Nickum are not carried out by a "controlled hardware portion".

Hence, the relied-on sections of Nickum neither disclose nor suggest:

transmitting, from the given one of the plurality of control devices to the information processing apparatus over the network, an identification number that identifies only the selected one of the plurality of controlled hardware portions and identification information that identifies only the given one of the plurality of control devices;

storing, in a control correspondence table of the storage unit of the information processing apparatus, the identification number that identifies only the selected one of the plurality of controlled hardware portions and the identification information that identifies only the given one of the plurality of control devices that were transmitted by the given one of the plurality of control devices such that the identification number that identifies only the selected one of the plurality of controlled hardware portions is associated with the identification information that identifies only the given one of the plurality of control devices, the at least one function not performed by any of the plurality of controlled hardware portions including said storing step;

repeating said selecting step, said transmitting step and said storing step using a further one of the plurality of control devices and a further one of the plurality of controlled hardware portions to associate the identification information that identifies only the further one of the plurality of control devices with the identification number that identifies only the further one of the plurality of controlled hardware portions;

and the relied-on sections of Nickum neither disclose nor suggest:

referring to the control correspondence table of the storage unit, using the controller, to obtain the identification number that identifies only the controlled hardware portion of the information processing apparatus that is associated with the identification information that identifies only the transmitting control device, the at least another function not performed by any of the plurality of controlled hardware portions including said referring step;

as called for in claim 1. (Emphasis added.)

It follows that the relied-on sections of Nickum do

not disclose or suggest the method defined in claim 1 and therefore do not anticipate the claim.

Claims 5 and 7 depend from claim 1 and therefore each is distinguishable over Nickum for at least the same reasons.

Independent claims 10 and 11 each include limitations similar to those set out above in the excerpts of claim 1. Therefore, each of claims 10 and 11 is distinguishable over Nickum at least for the same reasons.

Claim 16 depends from claim 10 is distinguishable over Nickum for at least the same reasons.

The Examiner also rejected claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nickum in further view of Croy; and rejected claims 3, 12, 14, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nickum in further view of Humpleman.

Claims 2-4, 6, 8-9, and 12 depend from claim 1, claims 13-15 and 17-18 depend from claim 10, and claim 19 depends from claim 11. Each of these claims is therefore distinguishable over Nickum for at least the same reasons as the claim from which it depends.

The relied-on sections of Croy and Humpleman do not remedy the above-described deficiencies of Nickum.

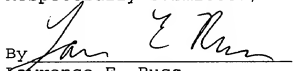
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections under §§ 102(e) and 103(a).

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which the Examiner might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: June 19, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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